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>SPACE SHUTTLE>RATHER: Since its beginnings, America's manned space program has been civilian-controlled and open, open to full, free press coverage. Now a change is under way, a change to secrecy and attempted censorship. David Martin reports on preparations for space shuttle missions to put military payloads into orbit.

MARTIN: The space shuttle: The Pentagon is counting on it to carry a new generation of intelligence satellite into orbit. The launch pad is being readied for next month's first-ever military shuttle mission. And today, the Air Force made clear it will be cloaked in secrecy just like any other military operation. GEN. RICHARD ABEL (U.S. Air Force): Because of our growing dependency on space systems, we intend to treat current and future space missions just as we do deployment of air, land and sea forces.

MARTIN: The Justice Department is already investigating leaks to several news organizations about the shuttle's payload. Today, the Air Force called on reporters not even to speculate about the mission. ABEL: Publication or broadcast of such information, speculative or not, would harm our national security.

MARTIN: Public scrutiny is only one of the problems the Pentagon has with the space shuttle. The first military launch is already a more than a month behind schedule, another reason why Defense Secretary Weinberger has declared that relying solely on the shuttle would pose an unacceptable risk to the nation's security. (footage of previous shuttle liftoff) VOICE OF REP. RON FUQUA (chairman, Science Technology Committee): That's the argument, they say, that they're putting all their eggs in the shuttle basket. We have four shuttles. They get priority in launch. I don't know what else they can ask for.

MARTIN: The Air Force wants to go back to launching some of the most secret satellites the old-fashioned way, with rockets. Rockets can't be reused like the space shuttle, but they can, Air Force officials say, be launched on much shorter notice. That is crucial when it comes to the early warning and communication satellites without which the military could not function. Trouble is the Pentagon has spent the last several years buying bigger satellites which take advantage of the shuttle's spacious cargo bay. Those satellites are too big to be launched by the existing fleet of rockets. So the Air Force would have to build a brand new rocket force with an estimated price tag of \$2 billion. The fact that the Defense Department is no longer willing to depend on a civilian agency like NASA to carry its satellites into orbit is the best evidence yet that the Pentagon views space not as a new frontier, but as one more arena for military competition and conflict. David Martin, CBS News, the Kennedy Space Center. <